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Expertise Statement

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EDC 102

I believe that one thing I have learned really well is milking and showing a Pure Bred Holstein Dairy Cow. I grew up with my cousins living on a dairy farm. My Uncle Stan and Aunt Cathy have taught me almost everything I know about dairy cows. I was also involved in the Tri-Community Dairy 4-H Club where my Aunt Cathy was the leader of it. I started out as learning most of my knowledge while in 4-H and following my aunt and cousins Brad and Andrew around the farm. After I had gotten the hang of 4-H and learned the basic things of showing a dairy cow I started to go to the local fairs and 4-H shows to show. Learning how to show a cow is trial and error, I started with a calf and as I grew I got to train bigger cows. Before the show I would practice walking the cow around the field so the cow could also learn how to be shown. Once I had passed the age limits of 4-H I continued to show cows at the local and larger fairs around the state. The only way I could have learned all this was from My Aunt Cathy and cousin Brad who helped me the most with learning to show. On the other said of the dairy farm was learning how to milk once I was in middle school. Uncle Stan and cousin Andrew had taught me how to do this. We milk every morning at 6am and every evening at 6pm. Learning to milk was a much slower process than learning how to show a cow because you can not mess up showing a cow but you can mess up milking a cow and loose all the profit from that milk tank. I started out just learning how to actually set up the milking tank and make sure everything is correctly set up and sanitized from the milking before. Than once I had completely understood how that process worked I moved on to the actual milking process of spraying, wiping, stripping, and cleaning the teats and than actually putting the milker on the cow. That is the easier part of the process, the part that took the longest to learn was how to tell if the cow was completely empty or needed the milker to be put back again. That part is not something you just learn, it comes from practice and experience and knowing the actual cow because each of them is very different in how their udder preforms. Another thing I also had to learn about milking is that if a cow has an orange crayon mark or ribbon that she was being treated and her milk could not go in to the tank or it would all be spoiled and that the yellow crayon mark or ribbon meant that she either had a blind teat or one quarter was dry. Milking and showing are both very different things and showing is something anyone could pick up with out really messing up but milking takes a lot of practice and is something that you need to not mess up because it could spoil the profit of that two days of milk in the tank. My aunt, uncle, and two cousins had a lot of influence over me in learning everything I know today about dairy cows, their health, and how to work with them.